

AMENDMENTS

IN THE CLAIMS

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12/31/04
1. (Currently Amended) A method of discriminating among a plurality of nucleic acid targets, the method comprising:
forming nucleic acid duplexes between said nucleic acid targets and at least one common nucleic acid probe in a hybridization reaction performed in the presence of a specific association enhancer under conditions suitable for accelerated association of ~~specific~~ duplexes having a perfectly matched region of complementarity, wherein the total ionic salt concentration of the hybridization reaction is less than 0.7M;
whereby differences in the extent of ~~specific~~ duplex formation discriminate between matched and mismatched duplex regions at the level of a single nucleotide difference between matched and mismatched duplex regions.
 2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said specific association enhancer is a cationic detergent.
 3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein said cationic detergent is selected from the group consisting of tetradecyltrimethylammonium salts, cetyltrimethylammonium salts, and octadecyltrimethylammonium salts.
 4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein said cationic detergent is selected from the group consisting of cetyltrimethylammonium bromide (CTAB), cetyltrimethylammonium chloride (CTAC), cetyltrimethylammonium hydrosulfate (CTAS), tetradecyltrimethylammonium bromide (TTAB), and octadecyltrimethylammonium bromide (OTAB).
 5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2, wherein said cationic detergent is cetyltrimethylammonium bromide.